



FEMA

Three Island Homes Pass Hurricane Dolly's Test

South Padre Island, TX – Richard Ehrlich, a South Padre Island building inspector and builder, knew all too well what Hurricane Dolly could do to the three housing units he had built on this trendy barrier island. He says Dolly was “like blasting your house with a car wash sprayer, for hours and hours.”

Hurricane Dolly came ashore on Padre Island July 23rd in 2008 as a Category 2 hurricane. Winds of 100 to 140 miles per hour lifted roofs, blasted through windows and garage doors, hurled debris, and drove horizontal rain. Most of South Padre Island's buildings sustained wind and/or water damage, some quite severe.

It was a tough test for the three housing units Ehrlich had built on this island at the bottom of the Texas Gulf Coast. Walking through his houses after the storm, Ehrlich was relieved to find mostly cosmetic damage.

“I was real happy with those houses during Dolly,” Ehrlich said. “We felt quite safe in there. When I build, I'm always thinking, Where are we? On a barrier island, with wind, water, hurricanes....”

Ehrlich built his first island house 12 years ago. “I was a builder in Colorado and had just moved to Padre Island. I was real worried about hurricanes, so I built it as strong as I knew how at the time.” The house was first tested in what he describes as a straight-line wind shear in May of 2000.



**Cameron County,
Texas**



Quick Facts

Sector:

Private

Cost:

Amount Not Available

Primary Activity/Project:

Building Codes

Primary Funding:

Homeowner